

Qusayy ibn Kilab

(400 - 480)

BRIEFING

Qusai ibn Kilab ibn Murrah (Arabic: قُصَيِّ بْنِ كِلَابِ بْنِ مُرَّةٍ, *Qusayy ibn Kilāb ibn Murrah*; ca. 400–480), also spelled Qusayy, Kusayy, Kusai, or Cossai, born Zayd (Arabic: زيد), was an Ishmaelite descendant of Abraham. Orphaned early on, he would rise to become chief of Mecca, and leader of the Quraysh tribe. He is best known for being an ancestor of the Islamic prophet Muhammad as well as the third and the fourth Rashidun caliphs, Uthman and Ali, and the later Umayyad, Abbasid, and Fatimid caliphs along with several of the most prominent Hashemite dynasties in the orient.

BACKGROUND

His father was Kilab ibn Murrah who died when Qusai was an infant. According to Islamic tradition, he was a descendant of Ibrahim (Abraham) through his son Ismail (Ishmael). His elder brother Zuhrah ibn Kilab was the progenitor of the Banu Zuhrah clan. After his father's death his mother Fatimah bint Sa'd ibn Sayl married Rabi'ah ibn Haram from the Bani Azra tribe, who took her with him to Syria, where she gave birth to a son called Darraj. His uncle was Taym ibn Murrah, who was of the *Quraysh al-Bitah* (i.e. Qurayshis living near the Ka'bah in Mecca).

LIFE

In Syria

Qusai grew up treating his step-father, Rabi'ah, as his father. When a quarrel broke out between Qusai and some members of the tribe of Rabi'ah, they reproached him and betrayed the fact that they never regarded him as one of their own. Qusai complained to his mother, who replied "O my son," she said, "your descent is nobler than theirs, you are the son of Kilab ibn Murrah, and your people live in the proximity of the Holy House in Mecca." Because of this, Qusai departed from Syria and returned to Mecca.

In Mecca

When Qusai came of age, Hulail ibn Hubshiyyah the chief of Banu Khuza'a tribe was the trustee and guardian of the Ka'bah. Soon Qusai asked for and married Hulail's daughter Hubbah. When his father-in-law died after a battle which ended in arbitration, he inherited the keys of the Kaaba to Hubbah. Hulail preferred Qusai as his successor from his own sons and according to Hulail's will, Qusai got the trusteeship of the Kaaba after him.

Qusai brought his nearest of kin of Quraysh, and settled them in the Meccan valley besides the Sanctuary – his brother Zuhrah, his uncle Taym ibn Murrah, the son of another uncle Makhzum ibn Yaqaza, and his other cousins Jumah and Sahm, who were less close. These and their posterity were known as *Quraysh al-Biṭāḥ* ("Quraysh of the Hollow"), whereas his more remote kinsmen settled in the ravines of the surrounding hills and in the countryside beyond and were known as *Quraysh az-Zawāhir* ("Quraysh of the Outskirts").

Qusai ruled as a King. He reconstructed the Kaaba from a state of decay, and made the Arab people build their houses around it. He is known to have built the first "town hall" in the Arabian Peninsula, a spacious dwelling which was known as the House of Assembly. Leaders of different clans met in this hall to discuss their social, commercial, cultural and political problems. Qusai created laws so that pilgrims who went to Mecca were supplied with food and water, which was paid for by a tax that the people paid. He distributed the responsibilities of looking after the visitors during pilgrimage, taking care of the Kaaba, warfare, and pacifying amongst myriad tribes living in Mecca.

ISSUE

Qusai had many sons, some of them being Abd (matrilineal great-grandfather of Fatima bint Amr), Abd-al-Dar, Abd Manaf and Abd-al-Uzza. It was a marked characteristic of Qusai's line that in each generation there would be one man who was altogether pre-eminent. Among his four sons, Abd Manaf was already honoured in his lifetime. However Qusai preferred his first born, Abd-al-Dar, although he was the least capable of all so he singled out Abd Manaf his second son for his honor and prestige. Shortly before Qusai's death he invested all his rights, powers, and transferred the ownership of the House of Assembly to Abd Manaf.

DESCENDANTS

The following dynasties claim descent from Qusai:

Hashemites

Humudid dynasty (through Idris ibn Abdullah)

Hashemite dynasty (through Qatadah ibn Idris)

Abbasid dynasty of the Abbasid Empire (through Abbas ibn Muttalib)
Fatimid dynasty of the Fatimid dynasty including the later Agha Khans. (through Ismail ibn Jafar)
Rassid dynasty of Yemen (through Ibrahim al Jamr bin Hassan al Muthanna)
Mutawakkilite dynasty of Yemen (through Ibrahim al Jamr bin Hassan al Muthanna as cadets of the Rassid dynasty)
Bani Shaiba key holders of the Kaaba.

Africa

Aluoite dynasty of Morocco (through Muhammad Nafs az zakiyah bin Abdullah al Kamal)
Idrisid dynasty of West Africa (through Idris ibn Abdullah)
Senussi dynasty of Libya (through Idris ibn Abdullah as cadets of the Idrisid dynasty)
Ishaqids:
Tolje'lo dynasty of the Isaaq Sultanate (through Sheikh Ishaq bin Ahmed)
Guled dynasty of the Isaaq Sultanate (through Sheikh Ishaq bin Ahmed)
Ainanshe dynasty of the Habr Yunis Sultanate (through Sheikh Ishaq bin Ahmed)

Indo-Persia:

Safavid dynasty of Persia (through Abul Qasim Humza bin Musa al Kadhim)
Alid of Tabaristan (through Zayd bin Hassan al Muthana)
Zaydi dynasty of Tabarstan (through Zayd ibn Ali)
Barha dynasty Including the later Nawabs of Samballhera (through Zayd ibn Ali)
Rohilla dynasty including the later Nawabs of Rampur (through Zayd ibn Ali as cadets of the Barha dynasty)
The Agha Khans (Through Ismail ibn Jafar as cadets of the Fatimid dynasty)
Daudpota dynasty including the later Nawabs of Bhawalpur and Sindh (Kalhora) (through Abbas ibn Muttalib)
The sultans of Mysore (through Qatadah ibn Idris as cadets of the Hashemite dynasty)
Sabzwari dynasty (through Ali al Reza)
Najafi dynasty of Bengal. Including the later Nawabs of Murshidabad and the Tabatabai family of Iran (through Ibrahim Tabataba ibn Ismail al Dibaj)
Jalaluddin Surkh-Posh Bukhari descendant of Qusai Bin Kilab through the 10 Shia imam Ali Al Hadi.

East Asia

Sultans of Siak (through Ahmad al Muhajir as cadets of the Ba alawi)
Bendahara dynasty of Pahang and Terengannu (through Ahmad al Muhajir as cadets of the Ba alawi)
Bolkiah dynasty of Brunei (through Ahmad al Muhajir as cadets of the Ba alawi)
Jamal al layl dynasty of Perak and Perlis (through Ahmad al Muhajir as cadets of the Ba alawi)
Sultans of Pontianak (through Ahmad al Muhajir as cadets of the Ba alawi)

Umayyads

Umayyad Caliphate (661–750) was the second of the three major Arab Caliphates established after the end of Rashidun Caliphate (632–661)

Umayyad dynasty
Umayyad dynasty of Cordoba